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ficer-in-Charge, Reptilia Section, ZSI, allowed me to examine their *Varanus* material. Romulus Whitaker critically read an earlier draft of the manuscript.

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INDRANEIL DAS

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27. RANGE EXTENSION OF THE PAINTED BRONZEBACK TREE SNAKE *DENDRELAPHIS PICTUS* (GMELIN)

The Painted Bronzeback Tree Snake *Dendrelaphis pictus* has been recorded from the whole of the Indo-Chinese region, from Bengal and the eastern Himalayas to southern China. It is common in many places in its range, and is found both in the hills and in the plains (Wall 1910, Smith 1943, Daniel 1983). This snake appears not to have been recorded from Nepal. In fact even the commoner Indian Bronzeback Tree Snake *D. tristis* was only recently recorded from Nepal (Flemming and Flemming 1973).

On 13 March 1988, while studying the Bengal Florican *Houbaropsis bengalensis* at the Dudwa National Park (28° 24'—28° 27' N, 80° 31'—80° 52' E), Lakhimpur Kheri district, Uttar Pradesh, I came across one Painted Bronzeback Tree Snake at the Navalkhad Phanta. The snake was seen on the ground at the base of a clump of grass about 50 to 70 m from the nearest tree and at least 500 m from the forest.

Several pictures were taken as it could not be identified beyond the generic level. On comparing the pictures with descriptions in 'Fauna of British India' (Smith 1943)

and 'Book of Indian Reptiles' (Daniel 1983) it was unmistakably identified as being a *Dendrelaphis pictus*. The main distinguishing characters were a yellowish flank stripe demarcated sharply above and below by dark (or black) stripes, a dorsal bronze coloured stripe along the vertebral column and a white belly.

The presence of the Painted Bronzeback Tree Snake in Dudwa is an extension of its range much further west than earlier reported.

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RAVI SANKARAN

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